

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4 and 6-27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 10 and 12 are amended, and claims 25-27 are added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings.

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the personal interview conducted on September 19, 2007. The substance of the interview, including any agreements reached, is reflected in the above amendments and the following remarks. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 18-24 are allowed, and that claim 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, for the reasons set forth below, claim 17 has not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 and 6-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,794,290 to Roberts in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,036,177 to Aouad et al. (hereinafter "Aouad"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a drum type washing machine. The washing machine includes at least one ceramic receiver provided on an inner surface of a drum and extending along an axial direction of the drum. Each ceramic receiver is configured to receive at least one ceramic piece therein. Each ceramic receiver comprises a housing having a first, open side

configured to receive the at least one ceramic piece therein, and a second, circumferential side including a plurality of openings formed therein. A peripheral edge of the first, open side of the housing is configured to be coupled to the inner surface of the drum. The housing is configured to lift laundry items in the drum as the drum rotates. A cover is positioned between the first, open side of the housing and the inner surface of the drum. The cover comprises a first side configured to extend across the first, open side of the housing, and a second side comprising a plurality of ribs that extend outward from the second side of the cover to the inner surface of the drum so as to maintain a position of the cover relative to the first, open side of the housing. As agreed during the personal interview, Roberts neither discloses nor suggests the features of independent claim 1, or the claimed combination of features.

Further, as discussed during the personal interview, Aouad fails to overcome the deficiencies of Roberts. More specifically, as discussed during the personal interview, Aouad neither discloses nor suggests any means by which an outer peripheral edge of either the base 30 or the cover 31 (considered by the Examiner to be interchangeably comparable to the claimed housing and/or the claimed cover) may be coupled to the drum 27. Further, Aouad neither discloses nor suggests any type of ribs that extend from either the base 30 or the cover 31. Thus, Aouad neither discloses nor suggests at least one ceramic receiving including a housing and a cover as recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts in view of Aouad should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-4 and 6-12 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejects claims 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts and Aouad in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,211,689 to Kobayashi and U.S. Patent No. 5,419,855 to Kikuta. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 13-16 are allowable over Roberts and Aouad at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features. Further, Kobayashi is merely cited as allegedly teaching the use of ceramic powder, and Kikuta is merely cited as allegedly teaching the use of ceramics containing alumina and silica. Thus, Kobayashi and Kikuta each fails to overcome the deficiencies of Roberts and Aouad. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 13-16 are allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of claims 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts, Aouad, Kobayashi and Kikuta should be withdrawn.

III. New Claims 25-27

New claims 25-27 are added to the application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 25-27 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, and are allowable at least for the reasons

set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned, Joanna K. Mason, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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